



MiTTs take jundi training to next level

Story and photo by 4th BCT PAO

4th Inf. Div.

Minutes away from the Karadah District in central Baghdad, Iraqi soldiers operate independently at a forward operating base, working to secure the city from terrorists.

Home to roughly 1,000 Iraqi Army Soldiers, FOB Honor is where the Iraqi Jundi, soldiers, take training to the next level with help from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.

“Our mission is to develop a self-sufficient, self-sustaining and defensive capable army for Iraq,” said 1st Sgt. Michael Welborn, noncommissioned officer-in-charge, Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Division, 4th BCT.

“This mission is greatly important,” Welborn explained. “For us to transition out of the role we’re in, not just as a MiTT team, but as an Army, we have to develop these units so they can take over our sectors and efficiently secure their own country.”

Prior to the Cobra Brigade arriving in Baghdad, members of the 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div. successfully trained the Iraqi Soldiers to master individual military skills at a level similar to what U.S. Army Soldiers learn during basic training, said Welborn.

“When we first arrived, all the Iraqi Soldiers were basically on the same level,” Welborn said. “We used our first 40-45 days to assess where exactly they were at, in terms of operational capabilities and then, in turn, came up with a plan of action.”

As the Iraqi brigade continues to evolve into a highly-capable fighting force, members of the Cobra transition teams focus on building a strong Iraqi noncommissioned officer corps and improving leadership abilities within the unit, said Staff Sgt. Seth Thomas, NCOIC, 1st Bn. MiTT maintenance.

“Right now, our main concern is getting the NCOs to take a leadership role within their units,” he explained.

One of the biggest challenges the MiTT faces is figuring out how to bridge the cultural gap between the two forces, said Thomas.

In the old Iraqi army, officers and senior enlisted personnel routinely abused

see MITT, page 3



An Iraqi soldier pulls security outside of a small media station in the Karadah District in central Baghdad.

Business Executives for National Security visit Marines

Story by Lance Cpl. Drew Hendricks

MNC-I PAO

Members of the Business Executives for National Security visited the Marines on Camp Victory in order to understand their wants, needs and concerns, Monday.

BENS is a national, nonpartisan organization of business leaders who apply the lessons they have learned through their businesses to assist our country in the areas of safety and defense.

The group, headed by Joseph E. Robert Jr., chairman

and chief executive officer of J.E. Robert Companies, visited with Marines on their way through Camp Victory. Robert met with Marines for dinner to discuss their ideas and issues concerning America’s role here.

Robert, whose son is serving

with Marine Recon, said he has a bit of a soft spot for Marines.

“I want to know what you need, what worries you or what you think America needs to know about your service out here,” said Robert.

Most Marines, like Staff Sgt. see BENS, page 4

In today’s Victory Times:

Page 2: Fire fighters control blaze at training base, forecast

Page 3: Eye protection

Page 4: Beat the expert

Page 5: Camp Victory operating hours

Iraqi, American fire fighters battle blaze

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Will Ackerman
447th AEG PAO

Iraqi and American firefighters battled a fire at a weapons training facility on the Victory Base Complex March 11.

Iraqi firefighters based at the training site responded to the fire after seeing black smoke billowing into the sky. The fire was too much for two fire trucks, and they called for assistance from American and Iraqi firefighters located throughout the complex, which is located adjacent to Baghdad International Airport.

"The Army (trainers) there said they used fire extinguishers initially, but the fire got too big," said Mario Jomantoc, a contractor at the site.

"We pushed water with our two trucks and then called for back-up," said Assad, the site's Iraqi fire chief. "The fire started suddenly getting big. We knew we couldn't handle it alone with our two trucks."

Camp Stryker's fire department called for assistance from firefighters at Sather Air Base, Camp Victory, Camp Liberty and Baghdad International Airport.



Firefighters from the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, prepare to battle a five-alarm blaze.

The 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Station crews were the first subsequent responders. Because the fire had burned for about 30 minutes, and rubber blocks lined the facility interior, billowing flames and thick, black smoke reached high into the afternoon sky.

"We were worried there might be people in the facility," said Tech. Sgt. Dennis Schipper, the Sather AB firefighter who took control as the incident commander. "We didn't (know) if there were occupants inside."

The Iraqi firefighters aggressively attacked the fire for a few minutes before the Sather team arrived. Schipper's team offensively attacked the fire, spraying about 5,000 gallons of water from their trucks.

With no hydrant systems, they and the other responding firefighters went on the "defensive" to try and save the adjoining dining facility and remaining indoor weapons training range.

"Our goal then was containment," he said.

They worked in concert with other responding firefighters to set up an "emergency" water tank. The system is a temporary water bladder the Sather AB fire truck sucked from to feed the firefighters' hoses.

The fire, which destroyed the east wing of the structure, burned until the early hours of Sunday. But smoke from the smoldering rubber was still seen drifting into the sky two days later.

The Iraqi and American firefighters said the challenges included no hydrants and difficulty communicating due to a language barrier. But they both agreed the joint training they perform each week paid

huge dividends when they came together to fight the fire, which was the largest most of them had ever fought. It was also the first real fire for some.

"Our (joint training) is very good," Assad said. "It makes it easy to work together. We worked like a team."

Most of the Iraqi firefighters have about three months of training. Schipper said they performed well under pressure.



Iraqi firefighters battle a blaze at a weapons training facility at Victory Base Complex, Iraq, Saturday.

"They were very aggressive and wanted to attack the fire from the interior of the structure. Once it was determined that the fire in the east side of the facility was unable to be extinguished, they were eager to assist our efforts protecting the west wing," Schipper said.

For many of the Sather AB team, It was the first structural fire, but all the constant training paid off.

"We knew exactly what to do (because of our training), said Airman 1st Class Jose Flores, 447th ECES firefighter.

Schipper also praised the combined efforts of all the firefighters, utilities Airmen and KBR.

"It was a total team effort. Without everyone's involvement, the structure, along with the adjacent structures, could have been a total loss," Schipper said.

Camp Victory Three-day forecast

Wednesday



Sunny
High: 82 F
Low: 57 F

Thursday



Sunny
High: 75 F
Low: 54 F

Friday



Sunny
High: 77 F
Low: 53 F

MITT

their power and distanced themselves from their subordinates, said Thomas. Leading by example was a foreign idea to most men in a position of power.

With this in mind, leaders of the 1st Bn. MiTT have developed a new phase of training for the Iraqi NCO.

For the first time in the new Iraqi Army, NCOs will conduct a 41-day training cycle, which is scheduled to start this month, said Welborn.

The training is aimed to improve soldiering skills at the individual, squad, platoon and company levels. The instruction will place emphasis on leadership and discipline, he explained.

The leadership training the Iraqi NCOs receive is modeled after the U.S. Army system but is tailored specifically for the Iraqi Army, said Thomas.

"We are teaching them the basic leadership skills, so they can turn around and teach their own soldiers," explained Thomas. "(U.S. Army Sergeants) can't go out there and train an Iraqi NCO's Soldier, that would be setting the wrong example," said Thomas.

"If their own NCOs train their junior Soldiers, they will look up to them as leaders and subject matter experts, basically making them more self-sufficient," he said.

Iraqi leadership is not the only thing the Cobra MiTT is concerned with as it

continues to ensure the success of the 5th Bde.

The transition teams are working to fix the administrative capabilities within Iraqi staff sections, Welborn said.

The Cobra MiTT has helped restructure the brigade into separate sections that focus on administrating areas such as personnel, intelligence, logistics and communications, but challenges still exist.

The division deals with unpredictable electricity, limited internet connection and other technological barriers.

They previously logged all of their plans and logistics with pens and paper, but the new systems will bring the unit up to speed, Welborn said.



Eye Protection

Lt. Anthony Aguilar, platoon leader, Company B, 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, Mosul, Iraq, was wearing his protective eyewear when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle Feb. 28. His protective eyewear blocked a piece of shrapnel from hitting his face, saving his eyesight and preventing serious injury.

MNC-I SURGEON'S COMBAT MEDICAL TRAINING CENTER

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Sgt. Anthony Kendrick
Anthony.A.Kendrick@iraq.centcom.mil

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Men's All Star Basketball GAMES

March 18th at 7 and 8 pm

Camp Victory VS Camp Stryker

HIP HOP Night
Buildings 124
after the Games!
DJ TOP FIGHT

Location: Basketball Court across from subway on Camp Victory!!!

898th Medical Detachment (PM)

PRESENTS

UNIT FIELD SANITATION
TEAM CERTIFICATION
TRAINING

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SGT. CHRISTIA SKERBECK
christia.skerbeck@iraq.centcom.mil

or

STAFF SGT. JEFFREY NOELLE
jeffrey.noelle@iraq.centcom.mil

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WARNING!

STOP

STOP MEANS STOP !

OBEY THE TRAFFIC SIGNS !!

The life you save may be your own. GO Home Alive!

BENS

Jesse L. Weinert, administrative chief, Marine Corps, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, voiced no real concerns except the ones they have for their families.

"The only thing I worry about is their well being," said Weinert. "I want to make sure they know I am proud of what I'm doing out here, and that they are being taken care of."

After the discussions quieted down, Robert handed out a truck load of goodies he brought for the Marines.

From some of the latest feature films released on DVD to gift certificates for music, the Marines went home with pockets full of gifts.

"It's a small way to say thank you for your service," said Robert.

According to Robert, the media makes it seem like the morale here is extremely low, but from what he sees it is the exact opposite of that here.

This is why it is important to talk to the servicemembers in person, added Robert. In order to get the real perspective you need to hear their side of the issue.

Joseph E. Robert Jr., chairman of J.E. Robert Companies, passes out DVD's to Marines during his visit. Members of the Business Executives for National Security visited Marines on Camp Victory in order to get a feeling for their needs and concerns.



BEAT THE EXPERT



Sgt. Maj. Paul Stevenson
sergeant major/ MNC-I PAO

MARCH MADNESS
2006
NCAA TOURNAMENT
ROUND 1 TIP-OFF

Vs.



Spc. Brian J. Anderson
editor/ MNC-I PAO

Syracuse	(5) Syracuse vs. (12) Texas A&M	Texas A&M
UAB	(8) Kentucky vs. (9) UAB	Kentucky
George Mason	(6) Michigan State vs. (11) George Mason	Michigan State
Wisconsin	(8) Arizona vs. (9) Wisconsin	Arizona
Montana	(5) Nevada vs. (12) Montana	Nevada
UW-Milwaukee	(6) Oklahoma vs. (11) UW-Milwaukee	Oklahoma

ACT EXAMS

AVAILABLE APRIL 23,
2006
1 p.m.

TESTING SEATS ARE LIMITED
CONTACT THE EDUCATION CENTER
FOR INFO AT
DSN 822-5183/4640
OR
educationcenter@iraq.centcom.mil

Sgt. Kurt Apple-gate (left), concrete and heavy equipment operator, and Pvt. Marshon Moore, truck driver, both of Equipment Platoon, Headquarters Support Company, 62nd Engineer Battalion, dig rough concrete out of a crater to prepare for pouring a new cement fill.



Photo by Spc. Jake Judge, 363rd MPAD

Operating hours

Coalition Cafe

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 - 8 p.m.
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sports Oasis

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.

Shoppette

Open 24 Hours
Camp Liberty Post Exchange
Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

Post Office

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Saturday - 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Sunday 1 - 5 p.m.

Golby Troop Medical Clinic

Sick Call Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Dental Sick Call:

Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic:

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Post Deployment Health Briefings:

Monday - Friday 1 p.m.

Pharmacy:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon, 1 - 4:30 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday 7:30 a.m. - noon

Legal Assistance/Claims

Saturday - Thursday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Personnel Service Support Centers

Monday - Saturday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

ID Cards

Monday - Friday
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.



TO THE AL FAW PALACE POST OFFICE



HOURS OF OPERATION:

Wed. 2 - 8 p.m.

Sun. 2 - 8 p.m.

Contact Camp Liberty Post Office for any questions. DSN 302-242-4391



MNC-I, CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD

TEXAS HOLD'EM TOURNAMENT

OPEN TO ALL PERSONNEL



Tournaments will be held twice a month (the second and last Mondays)



Prizes will be awarded to the winner.



Limited to 48 people (6 tables), please sign up early. Walk-ins are welcome if space is available.

CONTACT INFORMATION: For information or to sign up for March's tournaments call or email:

Sgt. Joseph Mahoney

DSN: 822-2065

joseph.mahoney@iraq.centcom.mil

TOURNAMENT RULES: basic rules are included w/ this email



TIME: 8 p.m. **PLACE:** MWR Bldg. 124

TOURNAMENT DATES:

March 27

April 10 and 24

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Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) &
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Training

Presented by the MNC-I HRE/O Office



March 19, 21, & 24 in the Al Faw Palace Ballroom

March 15 in the Al Faw Palace Euphrates Room

At both locations POSH training (1900-2000) & SAPR training (2000-2100)

For more information contact SFC Chris Baldur @ DSN 822-3532

BASIC SELF-DEFENSE CLASS

Every Wednesday & Friday throughout March

5 - 5:30 p.m.

Victory Sports & Fitness Center

Sponsored by

MNC-I Human Relations/Equal Opportunity Office

In support of the Army's Sexual Assault Prevention &
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Instructor: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kopaczewski (USMC)

For more information contact Sgt. 1st Class Chris Baldur, DSN 822-3545

Submit letters from home

Is your loved one deployed in support of Multi-National Corps-Iraq? Would you like to write him or her a message in the Victory Times? Send messages, three to four lines of text to brian.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil.

Ensure to include Soldiers name, rank, and unit.

Victory Times welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Send submissions or comments to brian.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil.

We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.

DRIVE SAFELY !!

This driver was wearing his seat belt, driving within the speed limit and he was in his proper lane.



The driver of this vehicle had his life tragically altered by a reckless driver.

Don't be the OTHER driver!!

MNC-I Commanding General: Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli

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